Turned down by health club

The Afro-American

Shepard quits Y.M.C.A. board

Baltimore, Md.

PHILADELPHIA

Impatience with the progress of token integration at the Central Branch resulted in the resignation of Councilman Marshall Shepard from the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Young Men's Christian Associations in a blast at discrimination policies this week.

In his letter of resignation addressed to William W. Bodine the Rev. Mr. Shepard said in part:

Dtd 12-5-59

"I hereby tender my resignation as a member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Young Men's Christian Association of Philadelphia. This action has become necessary because of the segregationist practices of the Central YMCA in the refusal and return of my check and application for membership in the Health Club.

$120

"It seems that the Central Young Men's Christian Association is not yet ready for the implementation of the full import of its name 'Christian Association.'

"I applied for membership in the Health Club at Central because at the present time there is a membership drive being carried on. My application was refused and correspondence indicated quite clearly that the refusal was based solely on the question of race. There is at the present time one Negro member but the Executive Secretary has made it abundantly clear that the majority of the membership is opposed to him."

* * *

THE ACTION of the Rev. Mr. Shepard came almost simultaneously with a release sent out by YMCA praising the interracial record of the local agencies. The timing of the release led to the belief that it was designed to offset the blast issued by the pastor-councilman although no reference was made to the Shepard charges.

The release says in part:

"The Philadelphia YMCA is proud of its record in the field of interracial advance over the past quarter of a century.

"The Philadelphia Young Men's Christian Association believes that racial discrimination is wrong. But more importantly we belive that we have successfully demonstrated that integration can, and will work on a voluntary basis," Hayward H. Coburn, Y president, stated today.

The objective of bringing about an integrated program was "tentatively" accepted by the Board of Directors of the Philadelphia YMCA in September, 1935—two years before the World's Conference of the YMCA's in Mysore, India, recorded "its belief that discriminations based on race and color are contrary to the will of God," and "that no Association or branch should adopt a racially exclusive membership policy."

Because the YMCA is a voluntary membership organization committed to, as well as restricted by, the basic principles of democratic action, progress at first admittedly was slwo, Coburn said.

* * *

ONE OF the first steps taken by the board was to insure that any new branches formed by the Association would be interracial. The first branches to be established under this policy were the Columbia Community Branch, now at 1522 N. Broad St., the Parkside Community Branch, now at 712 N. 43rd St., and the Community Y of Eastern Delaware County, now at Garrett Rd. and Lansdowne Ave., Lansdowne.

* * *

REFERENCE WAS made to the Health Club which provoked the resignation of the Rev. Mr. Shepard in the statement which says:

"This fall the last remnant of segregation disappeared from any phase of the Y's operations when the first colored person was admitted to the Central Branch Y's Health Club—with its long tradition as a private men's club."

The first colored member of the Central Y Health Club, Theodore Tillman, has since been admitted and has been fully accepted, according to Norman L. Fuller, Central Branch Executive.

STOCKHAM EMPLOYEES AID "Y" MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN — Left to right, W. W. Whetstone, chairman of the board of management of the 18th Street Branch YMCA; J. B. Whitehead, staff member of the Acipco Industrial YMCA and chairman of the 1959 membership campaign; the Rev. E. P. Jones, co-chairman of the eighth annual membership campaign; R. B. Spencer (shown presenting a check for $1,200 to Mr. Whitehead), chairman of the Stockham Auxiliary Board and R. C. Johnson, co-chairman.

Stockham employees enrolled with $1,200 in memberships in the 18th Street Branch YMCA at the kick-off membership campaign dinner March 2.

"Y" officials said that Stockham employees are playing a significant role in the membership campaign and also in the YMCA leadership.

A second report meeting is slated for 7 p. m. Monday, March 16 at the 18th Street Branch YMCA. Campaign Chairman Whitehead urged all campaigners to make report at this meeting.

Group Pushes for Mix In Washington YMCA

By RAY FARKAS

WASHINGTON (UPI) — A citizens group with the avowed purpose of advancing Christianity in the Young Men's Christian Assn. here is plotting the next move in its fight to integrate Washington's largest YMCA.

The "D.C. Citizens' Committee for the Advancement of Christianity in the Young men's Christian Assn." picketed the central branch of the "Y" recently for four consecutive days.

The pickets—mostly prominent local clergymen and labor officials from the AFL-CIO — were protesting racial discrimination in the largest of the capital's 12 "Y's."

The committee co-chairman, the Rev. James D. Foy, termed it "ironic" that discrimination should be centered in the YMCA.

One minister picket carried a sign reading: "Central YMCA—a bastion of segregation."

The second co-chairman — the Rev. Charles C. Webber, religious relations director for the national AFL-CIO — indicted the Central YMCA directors on four counts:

—Refusal to admit Negro boys to a school housed in the "Y,"

—Refusal to admit Negroes into membership.

—Refusal to admit Negroes to its camp.

—Refusal to allow Negroes to use the swimming pool, gymnasium and other facilities.

Randolph Myers, secretary of the general board of the Metropolitan YMCA, acknowledged that such practices exist in the central branch. He said, however, that the board had not acted on the problem at a recent meeting.

Four of the 35 board members are Negro.

Webber said repeated efforts had been made over the last eight months to have the "Y" change its policy, but all had failed. He said the central branch was the only "Y" in the city with any

DONATES 'Y' MEMBERSHIPS . . . Mrs. Lula C. Allen, R. N., president of the Louisville chapter of Tuskegee Institute Alumni Association, presents a check for the membership of twelve boys in the Chestnut Street Branch YMCA to R. O. Parks, Boys Work Secretary. The "Y" membership drive reached 89 per cent of its $12,000 goal Monday nite when $2,506 were reported. The drive will close May 4.

Tuskegee Alumni Gives YMCA 12 Boys Membership

The Louisville chapter of the Tuskegee Institute Alumni Association recently donated a check to the Chestnut Street Branch YMCA for the membership of twelve boys for 1959.

Mrs. Lula C. Allen, newly-elected president of the Louisville Tuskegee Alumni, presented the check to R. O. Parks, Boys Work secretary of the YMCA, during the membership drive of the Y which will end May 4.

According to Mrs. Allen, her group has given several scholarships to worthy students for the past five years.

Other officers are:

Louis W. Parker, vice president; Maxine G. Bukey, recording secretary; Everett Martin, treasurer; Russell Davis, corresponding secretary; John Eaves, chaplain; E. Q. Adams, parliamentarian; and J. W. Edmunds, reporter.

PICKETS PROTEST SEGREGATION IN 'Y'

Clerics and Labor Leaders Score Practices at Central Branch in Washington

WASHINGTON, April 4 (UPI) — A citizens group with the avowed purpose of advancing Christianity in the Young Men's Christian Association here is plotting the next move in its fight to integrate Washington's largest Y. M. C. A.

The D. C. Citizens' Committee for the Advancement of Christianity in the Young Men's Christian Association picketed the Central Branch of the "Y" recently for four consecutive days.

The pickets—mostly prominent local clergymen and officials of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations—were protesting racial discrimination in the largest of the capital's twelve "Y's."

The committee co-chairman, the Rev. James D. Foy, termed it "ironic" that discrimination should be centered in the Y. M. C. A.

One minister-picket carried a sign reading: "Central Y. M. C. A.—A bastion of segregation."

The second co-chairman—the Rev. Charles C. Webber, religious relations director for the national A. F. L.-C. I. O.—indicted the Central Y. M. C. A. directors on these counts:

¶Refusal to admit Negro boys to a school housed in the "Y."

¶Refusal to admit Negroes into membership.

¶Refusal to admit Negroes to its camp.

¶Refusal to allow Negroes to use the swimming pool, gymnasium and other facilities.

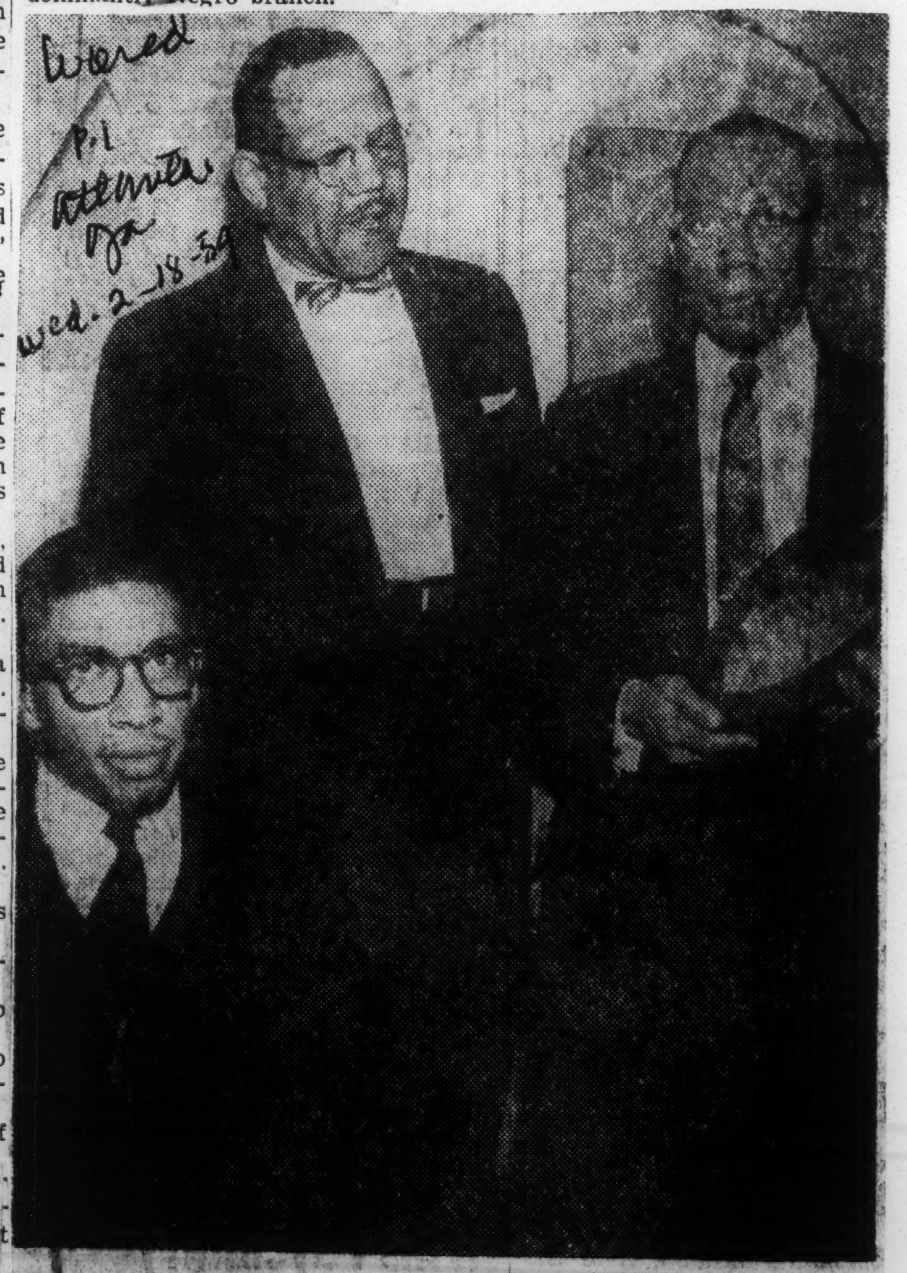
Randolph Myers, secretary of the general board of the Metropolitan Y. M. C. A., acknowledged that such practices exist in the central branch.

Mr. Webber said repeated efforts had been made over the last eight months to have the "Y" change its policy, but all had failed. He said the Central Branch was the only "Y" in the city with any remaining color barriers.

Mr. Myers countered that the Central Branch had been desegregating "step by step," but he refused to speculate how long it might take to wipe out remaining discrimination.

Mr. Foy termed the situation "the last stubborn spot of school segregation in Washington."

Mr. Webber said the pickets had met with "at least a little" initial success. An unidentified roomer at the "Y" read the signs, then told Mr. Webber he would check out of the Central Branch. Mr. Webber moved out of the Central "Y" several months ago in protest. Though white, he now lives at a predominantly Negro branch.



FOR YMCA SERVICE—T. M. Alexander holds the plaque awarded to him by the Butler Street YMCA in recognition of 18 continuous years of service as chairman of the Board of Directors. The plaque was presented at the regular meeting of the Emblem Club by Dr. Hilliard A. Bowen (l.). T. M. Alexander, is seated in the foreground.—(Perry's Photo)

52 1959

YMCA

Negro Children Flee 'Y' Camp After Threat

State Detective Says Gang Of Hoodlums Apparently Tried To Set Cabin Afire

By KYLE VANCE
Courier-Journal Writer

52

Versailles, Ky., Aug. 13.—Twenty-seven frightened Negro tenn-agers were evacuated from a ~~Y.M.C.A.~~ camp near here Thursday night after a telephoned threat.

State Police Detective Robert Moser reported evidence that kerosene was poured on leaves near one of th cabins and lit, but said the flames did not reach the cabin.

Moser denied earlier reports of shots being fired into the camp.

Known as Camp O-Tonka, the Y.M.C.A. property is on McCowans Ferry Road about 10 miles south of here overlooking the Kentucky River. It is used two weeks each summer by Negro children from Lexington.

Terming the threat incident the work of drunken hooligans, Moser gave this account of his investigation:

Thurman Lancaster, Jr., about 18, whose father operates a farm adjoining the camp, received a phone call about 2 p.m.

"Some white men are coming down there and clean out that camp and the nigger lovers around there," the caller declared.

Lancaster notified camp officials, armed himself with a .22-caliber rifle, and mounted guard.

Shortly after the call, he saw five or six white men marching along the river bank. He fired one shot into the air. The men disappeared.

State police arrived on the scene soon after. State Safety Commissioner Don Stuart guaranteed the safety of the youngsters for the night, but camp officials said they preferred to evacuate.

A bus was brought from Lexington about 8:30 p.m. and all the children were returned to their homes.